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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6556
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DDI/OEA//
RHHMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DB-Z//
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0640
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7078
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 7139
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RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 5454
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; December 24, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo, All TVs
President Lee Vows to Eradicate Corruption
in Local Governments

JoongAng Ilbo
Universities to be Banned from Taking into Account Records of
Applicants' English Tests, such as TOEFL and TOEIC, and Prizes They
Received in Various Academic Contests
in Admission Process

Dong-a Ilbo
Main Opposition Democratic Party Chairman Embroiled
in Graft Scandal

Hankook Ilbo
ROKG's Tax Reform Measures Approved
by National Assembly "in Tatters"

Hankyoreh Shinmun
Economic Activity Brisk in N. Korea-China Border Region; Signs
Abound that N. Korea will Announce
Economic Reform Measures Early Next Year

Segye Ilbo
ROKG Rolls Up Sleeves to Eradicate Abortion

Seoul Shinmun
ROKG's Policy on Homeless People Adrift

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

President Barack Obama, via a State Department official, recently
sent a letter to an ROK singer who is helping North Korean
defectors, saying that the U.S. is deeply concerned about North
Korea's human rights situation. The letter was sent in reply to one
that the singer had sent to the U.S. President in mid-June regarding
North Korean human rights. (JoongAng)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

According to the Voice of America (VOA), North Korea sold about 3,400 tons of weapons to the Democratic Republic of Congo in January, where fierce fighting continues between the government and insurgents. (Chosun)

According to the Kyodo News Agency, 12 North Koreans defected to the ROK from Russia in September with the help of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The 12 included North Koreans who worked at a timber company in Russia's Amur Province. (Dong-a, Seoul)

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-N. Korea

Conservative Chosun Ilbo replayed a Dec. 23 report by the Voice of America (VOA) that North Korea sold about 3,400 tons of weapons to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in January, where fierce fighting continues between the government and insurgents. According to the VOA report quoting a UN official investigating the DRC, a considerable amount of the weapons went to Congolese insurgents or nearby countries.

Conservative Segye Ilbo noted a Dec. 23 report by China's official

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Xinhua News Agency quoting Russia's Chief Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Alexei Borodavkin as telling reporters yesterday that the stalled Six-Party Talks will resume early next year.

STEPHENS